



MONTANA SCHOOLS

Official News Publication of the
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Superintendent

Vol. 11, No. 1

January 1, 1959

This issue of MONTANA SCHOOLS introduces a new format. To be issued the first of each month during the school year, MONTANA SCHOOLS will be sent to each administrator in sufficient quantity for distribution to all school personnel.

The Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will be distributed in early January. Items: Report on 22 new education programs, activities and services begun in 1957-58 . . . Graphic presentation of the National Defense Education Act . . . Simplified outline of principles of Montana school finance . . . 25 recommendations for improving Montana education.

Recommendations include many proposals for the Legislature. Some: Creation of a State Department of Public Instruction; Additional staff--foremost, a director of curriculum; Revision of teacher certification; Appropriation of at least enough funds to meet the state's share of the present Foundation Program--\$20,825,023 for 1959-61; Re-evaluation of the present Foundation Program; Consideration of the National Defense Education Act's provisions which apply to Montana.

The date for the 1959 Montana School Administrators' Conference may be changed, to eliminate a conflict with the Inland Empire Association meeting. More later.

Summer institutes sponsored by the National Science Foundation are scheduled at Montana State College and Montana State University.

Recent Publications: Distributed in December--"A Suggested Guide For School Libraries," see below . . . "The Reading Program," an in-service training aid . . . "Thinking Ahead," report of the 10th Annual School Administrators' Conference.

"A Tentative Guide For English, Grades 9-12," newly-revised, is ready for a second year's trial use in schools.

The School Library Committee met for the first time October 11. Its aims: To stimulate interest in the important role of school libraries . . . To offer advisory service in establishing libraries . . . To provide established school libraries with a clearing house for suggestions and recommendations for improving and expanding services.

The Committee recommended distribution to schools, for study and evaluation, of "A Suggested Guide For School Libraries." This guide was developed at a 1958 summer workshop at Montana State University and will be revised after trial use.

Montana's Thirty-Sixth Legislative Assembly convenes on January 5.

School eliminations for the 1958-59 National American Legion High School Oratorical Contest must be completed by January 15. Four scholarships are offered in the national finals. "Bill of Rights -- Reciprocal Rights and Duties" is the subject. Get details from your local American Legion post.

Judging of entries in the 1958 Pioneer Day Essay Contest is nearing completion. Cooperation by county superintendents who chose winning entries for each county helped speed up judging this year. Judges selecting the state winners are: Miss Rita McDonald, Montana State Library Extension Commission . . . Mrs. Ruth Fitzsimmons and Miss Edith Bray, former teachers, both of Helena . . . Harold E. Longmaid, Sr., of Helena, representing Montana mining pioneers . . . Robert G. Sando, State Elementary Supervisor.

Radiological detection instruments have been made available to at least one high school in every Montana county by the Federal Civil Defense Administration in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction and the Montana Director of Civil Defense. The Department of Public Instruction holds title to these instruments. High schools are urged to maintain kit batteries to keep kits in working order.

Reminder: Mid-January is the deadline for applications for two programs sponsored by the National Science Foundation -- the Academic Year Institutes (send applications to the colleges offering the programs); and Summer Fellowship Program for secondary school teachers (send applications to Teacher Program, American Assn. for the Advancement of Science, 1515 Mass. Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C.)

Colleges in this region offering Academic Year Institutes are: University of North Dakota; State University of South Dakota; Oregon State College and University of Utah.

Attorney General's Opinions re: Schools and School Districts, recently issued; Volume 27 --

No. 62. Opening School In Abandoned Territory--Closing School--Transportation. Held: 1. If the requirements found in Section 75-1522, RCM, 1947, as amended, are met for the opening of a school in abandoned territory of a school district which is attached to an operating school district, it is the duty of the board of trustees to open the school. 2. A school which is opened under the provision of Section 75-1522, RCM, 1947, as amended, must be operated as a school at least for such period of time as will determine the necessity and advantages of the school.

No. 68. Compulsory Attendance Until Sixteen Years of Age. Held: That any child between the ages of eight and sixteen years must attend school and the fact that a child has completed the work of the eighth grade will not excuse such child from further attendance.

No. 69. Liability For Indebtedness Of Territory Transferred From One School District To Another. Held: Territory which is detached from an existing school district and made a part of another school district under the provisions of Section 75-1805 (5) RCM, 1947, as amended, continues to be liable for its share of the bonded indebtedness of the district from which it is detached. The change of boundaries does not relieve any of the original territory from the indebtedness against which bonds were issued.